The Scarlet Queen, the Wild Treasurer Hunter, and the Crimson Dawn

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/83358571.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	F/F
Fandoms:	Star Wars - All Media Types, Star Wars: Doctor Aphra (Comics)
Relationship:	Chelli Lona Aphra/Qi'ra
Characters:	Chelli Lona Aphra, Qi'ra (Star Wars)
Additional Tags:	Cross-Posted from Comic Fanfiction Authors Archive (CFAA), Organized Crime, Book: Star Wars: Crimson Reign, Manipulation, Queer Themes, Queer Character, Canon Queer Character, Canon Queer Character of Color, Implied/Referenced Sex, Flirting, Unresolved Romantic Tension, Bisexual Female Character, LGBTQ Themes, Canon LGBTQ Character, LGBTQ Female Character of Color, Galactic Empire (Star Wars), Mentioned Domina Tagge, Mentioned Darth Maul, Mentioned Sana Starros, Mentioned Darth Vader, other characters not mentioned in tags, Wordcount: 1.000-3.000, Crimson Dawn Crime Syndicate (Star Wars)
Language:	English
Series:	Part 2 of Originally on Comic Fanfiction Authors Archive
Stats:	Published: 2026-05-04 Words: 2,152 Chapters: 1/1

The Scarlet Queen, the Wild Treasurer Hunter, and the Crimson Dawn

by lefemmerouge2

Summary

Qi'ra prepares for meeting a notorious rogue and renegade who steals from sealed archives, floating prisons, and almost-impossible-to-access caves, selling the artifacts to the highest bidder to earn some cash for herself. Thanks to her informants, she has a strategy in mind to ensure that this woman, who can be described as nothing short of an interstellar disaster, will work for her and do what she wants. She sees this as one of the many ways to bring down the Galactic Empire. At the same time, she plans to offer this woman something she can't, and won't, refuse, something she will not turn down, considering her dalliances with other women...

Notes

Happy Star Wars Day! This fic is being posted on here for the first time. Previous drafts ranged from about 1,300 words to over 2,100 words. I decided to focus on Qi'ra and Aphra for this fic. This was cross-posted on Squidge World.

This fic uses information from pages 76-79 and 204-209 of Star Wars: Women in the Galaxy (most updated version), specifically the entries on Doctor Aphra and Qi'ra, as an inspiration. The entry for Qi'ra says her efforts laid the groundwork for a plot to eliminate Vader and kill Palpatine (which Luke credited her for) and noted she leveraged what she knew about the Sith with help from from Darth Maul. I took some quick notes and used that here to construct the story. I only included a few of those comics (listed in the end notes). I did not include those about Vader ("Star Wars: Darth Vader"), the rebels ("Star Wars") [only partially as the text references Qi'ra's meeting with the rebels when she comes bearing gifts], or the bounty hunters ("Star Wars: Bounty Hunters") into this fic.

I'm not including it in this fic, but there is a whole storyline, in the first Doctor Aphra omnibus, comprising Star Wars #19-24, which focuses on Luke Skywalker and Jedi lessons from the past, Shara Bey trapped on a Star Destroyer named Tarkin's Will, Bey *almost* escaping before she is stabbed by an Imperial agent named Commander Zahra Ellian, who tries to force her to confess. Leia fights Zahra in hand-to-hand combat and she seemingly leaves Zahra for dead. Similarly, I'm not including anything from the storyline of Star Wars: Bounty Hunters #18-26 which focuses on the sad story of Valence who is forced to serve the Empire, the ruthless syndicate, and bounty hunters who are absolute scum.

Apart from all of that, I have notes on Star Wars: Doctor Aphra #16-21, which features Domina Tagge, Sana Starros, Aphra, and so on, with the latter two infiltrating a Crimson Dawn auction. Aphra uses Domina's resources to her advantage, while Kho Phon Farrus makes an appearance (Kho is non-binary, uses they/them pronouns, which everyone respects) and is shown talking to The Archivist. There's also characters like Just Lucky and Ariole, who have an openly gay relationship, which can be strained. Sana and Aphra work together, while Aphra teases Pho. As it turns out, Aphra, Pho, and Sana (and others like Eustacia Okka) went to the University of Bar'leth together, where Aphra seems to have flirted with Pho, bringing them into a friends-who-do-bad-things-together group, with Pho and Aphra scheming to break the rules together. Sana has a ship named the Volt Cobra, Domina aims to track down Aphra (this is the part where her brother calls Aphra her "pet"), and there's the beginning of the saga with the Spark Eternal (which takes over Aphra and makes her do terrible things). In the last panel of Doctor Aphra comic in the omnibus, Magna Tolvan, one of Aphra's on-again, off-again girlfriends (Sana is the same way), appears. It is implied that Domina *may* be flirting with Sana. The last two issue in the omnibus (Star Wars #25) has a flashback to Obi-Wan and Anakin during the Clone Wars (presumably), Darth Vader and Darth Sidious training with a lightsaber battle, Kylo Ren feeling frustrated, the Battle of Exegol, and Poe Dameron talking with other Resistance fighters.

Although the aforementioned omnibus (noted in the end notes) has various meetings with the notorious Domina Tagge (Aphra, Sana Starros, and Kho Phon Farrus meet with her), Aphra and Qi'ra are never shown actually meeting one another, which is odd. In fact, Aphra's Wookieepedia page only points to *one* meeting between them in issue #28 of the second Aphra series, saying: "Aphra then met up with Lady Qi'ra," with no more detail provided. The first title was "Lady Qi'ra's Lament and the Crimson Dawn" and then "Lady Qi'ra, the Wild Treasurer Hunter, and the Crimson Dawn" (as it is on a certain site) but it was changed prior to publication due to HTML problems with the previous title when posting a link on Tumblr. In this fic, Qi'ra is bi. I talk about her in-canon partner/love interest in the story.

As always, comments, and constructive criticism, are welcome and appreciated.

See the end of the work for more notes

- Inspired by When Aphra brings together her friends to… commit crimes (breaking and entering plus theft) against a university professor by cleoinspace
- Inspired by Lesbian throuple endgame [Star Wars: Doctor Aphra (2020)]. Sadly, Chaos Agent fucked this up. by cleoinspace
- Inspired by Doctor Aphra is FILLED with "blush-worthy adventures" [my fan edit] by cleoinspace
- Inspired by [Restricted Work] by neptunesenceladus

Standing on the bridge of her beautiful, majestic flagship, *The Vermillion*, she prepared herself. She knew, from her sources, that the notorious space archaeologist, a rogue and renegade in her own right, had worked for Darth Vader himself, but also for the Rebel Alliance. She found this curious. She also had learned that this expert-of-sorts had been in the employ of none other than Domina Tagge, a ruthless woman who led the Tagge Corporation. As the leader of the Crimson Dawn, she wanted to bring together "special people" who had specific criminal skills. She aimed to gain the power and knowledge of the Sith, thanks to help from none other than The Archivist, who was formerly known as Sava Madelin Sun. She had one goal: killing the Emperor and Darth Vader once and for all. To achieve what she believed was freedom, she ignited a war between the syndicates, causing chaos through use of double agents and other means.

She, and her syndicate, existed outside of the bounds of Imperial law. Surely that was dangerous, but she didn't care about that. In fact, she had already met with the rebels, including the well-known Leia Organa herself, all in an effort to push them in the direction she wanted. Before they knew it, the Rebels would be achieving her goals. It would be too late for them to stop it, even if they realized that she was manipulating them. Her goals would have been met and she would have won. She had hired shady assassins to off syndicate leaders. She wanted people to fear her and bow to her rather than to the Galactic Empire. She had even gone face-to-face with Darth Vader, who suspected that she had been trained in techniques of force wielders by none other than Darth Maul. Prior to this, people thought Maul was dead, and had been killed by Obi-Wan Kenobi all those years ago on the planet of Naboo. Somehow, he had survived.

She loved sporting tailored designer gowns while sailing aboard opulent yachts traveling through space. She appreciated the finer things in life as someone who came from almost nothing, scrounging for scraps. She had to claw her way up, even killing the previous head of Crimson Dawn, Dryden Vos, and not feeling bad about it. This secured her independence, allowing her to ascend to the syndicate's top echelon. Through it all, she had become interested in not only money and influence, but *surviving*. She learned tactics that would serve her well in the future. She had used her magnetism to her advantage, relying on a mix of lying, charisma, and intelligence, sometimes all at the same time.

Her assistant entered the room. "Lady Qi'ra," he began, "*she* has arrived." Everything was going as she planned. "Bring her in." The man bowed. "I will see to it." She was prepared for this woman. She would make sure to play her as she had done with everyone else. She wouldn't treat her as a "pet" as Domina Tagge apparently saw her, according to reliable sources. Instead, she'd treat her as a *valuable asset*, even if she did her own thing. She had a devious plan. She knew that if she started this, then this woman could become as important to her than anything, regardless of whether she later ended up working with the Empire or not. That didn't matter to her. As someone who was ambitious, she had become an expert at assessing what was going on around her, and, if necessary, finding escape routes. She knew what was the right time to cajole and flatter, or change the topic. She wasn't afraid to be violent if the situation called for it.

The woman entered, led in by her attendant. She was pleased. Seeing her in person was different than through a hologram. With her brown hair and tannish skin shining in the light, the woman was chipper. She didn't take off her helmet, which kept her hair in place. Her gun had been confiscated before entering the room for security reasons. "It is a pleasure to be in your presence, Miss Qi'ra," the woman said. She knew better than to call her a "fancy lady" or anything else like that, so she tried to plan it cool. Annoyed at being called a Miss, seeing it as a downgrade in status, she snapped at her, almost instinctively. This was a way to make her fall in line. "It's *Lady Qi'ra* to you, Doctor Aphra."

Aphra was used to this kind of thing. Perhaps it was true that this so-called "Scarlet Queen" could really be vindictive. She had to play this carefully. She only partially aware that she was being pulled into her web and that this lady saw every interaction she had as *a transaction*, where she gave another person something or threatened to take away something, allowing her to do what she wanted. Running a criminal syndicate required trusting no one and if you did, than you had failed. She did not want to be burned by anyone. She wouldn't hope that people did what was required. Instead, she would give them *no choice* but to comply. Perhaps it was exhausting. Even so, she liked the power.

In some ways, Aphra was similar. She was fearless and she *always* wanted to turn a profit. She was morally ambiguous, with her talents and attitude making her attractive, on a business level of sorts, to Darth Vader. She even had configured two murderous droids named Triple Zero and BT-1, who sometimes helped her, and other times did not. On the other hand, her propensity to not have relics in a museum and her nature as an unmitigated scoundrel of the highest order, went against what Qi'ra was about. While she liked going on adventures, the crime lord had no reason to prove her worth. Surely she had her own brand of luck, but she would never do what the good Doctor did: solving problems on the fly and speeding out of situations with her spaceship, the *Ark Angel.* She would never follow a dodge-and-weave approach. She wanted to confront issues head on and smash apart any challenges in her way.

"So, I've heard you are *very handy*, Doctor Aphra," she said. Seeing that this woman was getting bored, she added, "you will be paid handsomely." That made Aphra's ears perk up. She was willing to go to great lengths so that she could raid not just tombs, but caves, secure facilities, or anything. She knew how to play the game to get what she wanted. She had even once flirted with Domina Tagge, of all people, to get her electric tattoos, on her arm, fixed. This time would be different. "What's the job, Lady Qi'ra?" she asked. The crime lord had risen from being a scrumbat in Cordelia to this level. She'd do anything to keep her power and position, within reason, no matter the cost to others. As an excellent observer and skilled manipulator, she reasoned that this archaeologist didn't stand a chance against her. While she could be very guarded, she could also be very outgoing, a duality which had allowed her to survive over the years.

Before Aphra could leave, Qi'ra pulled her close to her chest, which was covered by a dark red half-jacket, secured by decorative, and practical, silvery metal arm braces, around her wrists and up to her elbows. She had a dark reddish wrap over her midriff. Her belt, complete with one holster for a blaster and another for a data pad, almost resembled the belt that Aphra wore herself. Her attendant did nothing and didn't care to stop her. This was just what she did. Although she had done this kind of thing with men, to achieve her goals, she didn't mind doing the same with women. From the intelligence she had gathered, she already knew that

Aphra, whose full name was Chelli Lona Aphra, had many exes. Obviously, they weren't an evil legion or anything like that. Instead, they just hated her guts, almost always for justified reasons. Some had gone on to work for the Rebel Alliance, while others were smugglers who had own agendas.

Under her breath, the crime lord described the job. She then whispered in the woman's ear, wanting to entice her, to make sure she'd do the best job possible. This was just another way of influencing and controlling this woman to do her bidding. "If you do the job right, Chelli, I'll *reward you* in a way that a woman can only do with another, if you know what I mean," she said. The Doctor's face became extremely red, turning the color of laser blast coming out of a stormtrooper's regulation blaster. Was this crime boss saying what she was thinking she was saying? She *never knew* that this woman swung that way. From what she had heard, she had been with a self-described scoundrel named Han Solo. She couldn't stop thinking about this woman's beauty, as she stared into her blue eyes and saw her nicely cut, styled, and groomed brown hair. This woman's radiating confidence drew her in. She couldn't help herself.

Over the years, she had been prepared for anything. Her cutting humor, fast talk, and adaptability, had allowed her to thrive almost anywhere. She had her own brand of luck. She was always prepared. Deep down, despite outward appearances, she was only truly allied with herself despite her heated relationships with exes who were smugglers, rebels, and the former Imperials, such as Sana Starros and Magna Tolvan. Although she had crossed the paths of Rebels and Imperials, she saw the rebels extremely misguided on a deep level. In a certain way, she almost respected the Empire, but she didn't want to obey it. Additionally, she thought the Empire was, on the larger scale, good. She'd never say those views publicly because she knew they were unpopular. Even though Qi'ra was no rebel, by any stretch, saying something pro-Imperial, even partially, would be a death sentence. So, she kept her mouth shut about it.

She could smell the perfume in her nostrils, perfume that this woman had obviously put on for *her*. The only thing that hurt was her heart because she liked this woman a lot and thought that she'd ruin it once again as she had done with so many other women over the years. Being around this crime lord didn't bring her momentary relief. Even so, it did make her excited and thrilled. She always liked being around powerful women. Something always drew her in. She wasn't exactly sure what it was, but she didn't care to learn the real reason. She had a job to do after all. She'd never sacrifice herself for this woman, or any woman. She would certainly go to extremes, even if it meant getting some out-there artifact that very few people heard about, an item she only knew from stealing some book from a secure library on top of a death-defying tower surrounded by boiling water. She loved that kind of thing.

Still blushing a bit, Aphra slowly started to back away. "Okay, Lady Qi'ra. I'll...uh...steal a holocron from the Jedi Temple...on Coruscant...you can count on me. It's a Doctor's guarantee." The crime lord smiled. If she had known how Aphra liked to be praised and was weak when beautiful women complimented her, it wouldn't have changed what she had done. In fact, she may have come on even stronger if she had been aware of that. She'd never let this damn upstart distract her in any way. She had heard that in the past, this Doctor had, apparently, been able to push powerful people to do what she wanted. She wouldn't let that happen to her. As for Aphra, she remained in a bit of a daze as she enamored the crime lord.

She was thrown out of it when she heard the words, "Doctor Aphra, *I expect* to hear good things. Don't let me down. *You know* what's at stake if you fail." She bowed. "Yes, Lady Qi'ra. Anything for you."

The crime lord waved her hand. "You are dismissed." The attendant walked the archaeologist out of the room and down to the hangar bay, where her ship was waiting. Her custom-built blaster was returned. After she left *The Vermillion*, she wondered to herself what had just happened. Had she made a mistake? Was she being manipulated *yet again*? She wasn't sure. What she did know was that if she did not return with the holocron, the Crimson Dawn would hunt her down. She had to avoid that all costs. If she got something *special* at the end, that would be the cherry on top, right? She pulled a lever and the *Ark Angel* warped through hyperspace. She was ready for whatever came her way...

End Notes

The original version was posted on CFAA, also known as Comic Fanfiction Authors Archive. I am eschewing the tags "+Modern Age (1986-Present)", [Star Wars: Crimson Reign - 2021-2022] (used something similar), [Star Wars - 2020-2024], and [Star Wars: Doctor Aphra - 2020-2024] (used something similar). On April 3rd, I asked Steff/S.L. Walker, creator of CFAA, who uses she/her pronouns, on Discord, if I could write about a trade paperback which collects the issues of Star Wars: Crimson Reign. She previously said I could not write about the KPop Demon Hunters graphic novel adaptation. After she said it was okay as "long as it's based on the book," I asked for clarification, and she told me, "Yeah. Star Wars is huge and spraw[l]ing. I too am in that fandom...as long as it's based on the elements/story from a comic, that's fine."

When she said if it is based on the book, she is saying there cannot any fics on CFAA for the Star Wars films, which I have written about, elsewhere. To be frank, I'm more familiar with comics like Crimson Reign and the Doctor Aphra series. When pitching it, I was thinking about Star Wars: Battle of Jakku (I didn't realize that until later), where Rynn Zenat and Preeti Delmin kiss in the middle of a battle with stormtroopers (upcoming fic on that). I pitched that comic and the Aphra comic books too (presently there are three series: Star Wars: Doctor Aphra (2016-2019), Star Wars: Doctor Aphra (2020-2024), and Star Wars: Doctor Aphra – Chaos Agent (2025) [wasn't a big fan of this one]. In addition, there was "Doctor Aphra: An Audiobook Original," an audio drama starring Aphra, with a script by Sarah Kuhn. She told me, "If you went and wrote a Clone Wars fanfic, I'd have questions. But I'm pretty sure Aphra is a comics-only character and like I said, as long as it's based on the book and elements therein, go for it." So, I'll write for those comics too.

Despite that, I wanted to continue with this. After all, Enceladus expressed enthusiastic support for additional fics on Star Wars comics on the same server. Since there's only one other Star Wars fic on that site, it is a bit of an inspiration, although that fic is very different from this one. I re-read Crimson Reign again to come up with this fic. I later realized I had incorrectly identified Crimson Reign as the trade paperback, and was actually talking about "Star Wars: Crimson Reign Omnibus," which, as Wookieepedia puts it, the book is a "hardcover Marvel Omnibus compilation of the entirety of Marvel Comics' Star Wars: Crimson Reign crossover event" with crossover issues from Star Wars, Darth Vader, Doctor Aphra, and Bounty Hunters included. Specifically it compiles the following, which ran from 2021 to 2022: Star Wars: Crimson Reign #1-5, Star Wars #19-25, Star Wars: Bounty Hunters #18-26, Star Wars: Darth Vader #18-27, and Star Wars: Doctor Aphra #16-#21.

Star Wars: Bounty Hunters features a short-haired woman Vukorah, and T'onga and her wife Losha Tarkon. The latter barely survive and spend time on the Edgehawk. They all end up working for the Crimson Dawn. At least the gay characters live. I'm glad that *none* of them are cruelly killed off like Cinta, in a rebel attack gone wrong, the still-controversial episode of Andor season 2 ("What a Festive Evening"). Otherwise, in Star Wars: Darth Vader #18-27, Sabé (former handmaiden of Padmé) comes to Polis Massa, Darth Vader prevents a massacre, and later learns that the Crimson Dawn are integrated within the Imperial bureaucracy. Most significantly, Sabé and Darth Vader work together.

Lastly, not long after publishing this on CFAA, I received comments on my two existing fics on that site from S.L. Walker, telling me I was overtagging, saying I should "just tag stories with things that are wholly either in the fic or deeply relevant to the fic." So, on CFAA, I took a minimalist tagging approach, removing tags for "theft," "implied sexual content," and "manipulative relationships" prior to publication.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!